

CAMPAIGN FINANCE DIVISION

☒ WAIVER REQUEST
☐ RECONSIDERATION REQUEST

DATE: 6/1/2021
DOCKET #:

FILER INFORMATION

Name: Kathy Reznik Benoit
Office: Judge, Family Court, Election Section 3, Division D
Parish: EAST BATON ROUGE
Election Date: 11/3/2020
Level of Office: District

REPORT INFORMATION

Name of Report: 10-G
Original Due Date: 11/25/2020
Date Filed: 12/30/2020
Activity Receipts: \$1,401.84 (candidate's own funds)
Expenditures: \$1,442.88
Funds at Close of Reporting Period: \$0

LATE FEE INFORMATION

Amount of Late Fee: \$2,000
Days Late: 35
Late Fee Order Received: 3/17/2021
Payment/Waiver Request Due Date: 4/6/2021
Waiver Request Received: 3/17/2021
Additional Information Requested:

- Medical
- Financial
- Other

COMMENTS: Candidate submitted waiver request by fax and states that she did not receive the late fee but her campaign manager did. She said that she is not a career politician and this is her first time running for office in LA. She said her campaign consisted of herself and her pregnant sister. She states that she called the staff at Ethics 7 times before 10/31/2020 to ask for assistance on how to complete the forms and tried to follow the instructions given. She said she had started a temporary teaching position and was teaching all day and making lesson plans. She said when she filed her 10-P she was closing out her election so she did not think she had to file additional reports since there was not a run off election.

OTHER LATE FEE INFORMATION

Campaign Finance:

Other Outstanding Reports: No
Other Outstanding Late Fees: No
Prior Late Fees: No
Reassessed Late Fees: No

Disclosure Statements:

Other Outstanding Late Fees: No
Prior Late Fees: No

March 15, 2021

State of Louisiana
Department of State Civil Service
Louisiana Board of Ethics, Executive Secretary
P.O. Box 4368
Baton Rouge, LA 70821
(225) 219-5000
FAX: (225) 381-7271
1-800-842-6630

Re: Request for a waiver of the late fee assessment for November 3, 2020 Election 10-P Campaign Finance Disclosure Report filed 4 days late and the 10-G Campaign Finance Disclosure Report filed 35 days late for Kathy Reznik Benoit Candidate, 11/3/20 Election

To: Louisiana Board of Ethics,

I did not receive a certified copy of your February 24, 2021 letter, but my campaign manager did, and so I am writing in response to address its contents as applies to the late fee assessment for the November 3, 2020 Election 10-P Campaign Finance Disclosure Report allegedly filed 4 days late and the 10-G Campaign Finance Disclosure Report filed allegedly filed 35 days late.

I would like to appeal the Late Fee Assessment Orders for the 10-P and 10-G Campaign Finance Disclosure Report for the following reasons:

1. I am not a career politician, and this was the first time I have run for office in Louisiana.
2. My campaign committee consisted of myself and my pregnant sister, who I had asked to help me out, as I did not have anyone else, and I needed one so that I could comply with forming a campaign committee, and now she is about to give birth in April and is stressed out about how this is going to affect her life.
3. My sister is not a career politician either, but a stay-at-home mom, who was, and still is, pregnant, trying to do remote learning for kindergarten with her two twin girls at home, who were also in two separate classes and had two different schedules and so that pretty much occupied all of her time.
4. I called the Louisiana Board of Ethics 7 times before October 31, 2020; July 31, August 4, August 14, August 17, September 7, October 2, and October 30, 2020 asking for assistance with how to complete the finance disclosure report forms, and tried to follow the instructions given, so I was not in any way trying to avoid my

responsibility to file these forms, but rather was keeping in constant contact with the Louisiana Department of Ethics and was assured that they understood my position.

5. I had just started a temporary teaching position at a local high school, St. Joseph's Academy in the Fall of 2020, teaching 4 Theology III classes a day while the teacher was out on maternity leave, after being on unemployment during the summer. This position lasted from September thru December, 2020, and it was my first time teaching, so I was occupied, all day teaching and then all evening trying to make lesson plans etc. Of course, the teacher went into labor early and did not leave me anything of hers to teach, except for the textbook, which was new for her class and so the old power points for their last textbook didn't even apply, and I had to make all new ones. This new job along with the campaign was very taxing, but I was trying to make sure that I was following all of the campaign finance rules, and had even made a binder with all of the information in it for filing the campaign finance reports right after qualifying occurred and so was working to fulfil all of the ethical obligations required.
 6. October 24, 2020, the day the 10-P form was due was a Saturday, and I had a court appearance on October 28, 2020, being represented by the District Attorney's Office of Support Enforcement, as I have been separated since 11/27/2018 and had an interim support judgment signed in February 2020 but my husband, soon to be ex-husband had not paid me ANY interim child or spousal support since the judgment was signed, so at the time the report 10-P was due I was also preparing for that case, which had so much riding on it so that I could have some financial support while our divorce proceeding was pending, which also took my attention until after the hearing, when I then proceeded to complete the report.
 7. When I had filed the 10-P campaign finance disclosure form, I was closing out my campaign finance account and had indicated as such on the 10-P form, and since the election was over, as there was not a run-off election in for my office, so I was not a candidate in the December 2020 election, I did not believe that I was required to file any other forms after that, especially a form prior to an election that I was not involved in.
 8. Following the submission of the 10-P report on October 30, 2020, I was contacted by the Louisiana Department of Ethics stating that some of the calculations were in error, (I have attached the e-mail from the department to this appeal) and so I was asked to amend the form.
 9. I was given a new deadline in which to amend my form, and I am attaching the first page of the letter that I received from your office for reference.
 10. I was then informed that I was to file the 10-G form, which I did, when requested, and given a new deadline in which to file it, which I did. I am also attaching the first page of the letter that was sent to me by your office for reference.
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11. If the election was over for my position, so I wasn't on the ballot, and I had closed out the account and let the Louisiana Department of Ethics know within my 10-P form, thinking it was the last form I had to file, then there should have been no other forms for me to file; yet, when I was made aware that there was yet another form to file, I complied with the request and was even given a new date with which to file.
12. Please review the correspondence sent by the Louisiana Department of Ethics, and you will find that I was interpreting the rules to the best of my ability and according to the information that I was receiving from the correspondence and communication with your office.

I understand that it is important to have oversight in campaigns as there are persons who are trying to take advantage of the system, but as you can see from my reports, I am not one of them, and don't see how anyone outside the political system can navigate all of these procedures.

If anyone would like information on how the forms distributed by your office could be made more clear to the masses, then I would be happy to let you know. I know that they may seem clear to you, but you already know the information and so what makes sense to you, may not make sense to those who do not have as much experience with the process.

I hope that this letter and the attachments suffices as an explanation for your office as to why I should not be penalized for filing a report only 4 days late, and for failing to file a report for an election that I was not even a candidate in.

If it does not seem adequate, then I would request that I be allowed to appear before the board to make my plea for a waiver.

I appreciate your service to ensure just and valid elections in our State.

Please contact me with any further information that you may need, or what is required of me to do next.

Blessings,



Kathy Benoit

From: Angela Newsom (ETHICS)
Sent: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 7:29 AM
To: kathy4fcjudge@gmail.com
Cc: Michele Andrieu
Subject: RE: Amendment to LA 92016: Campaign Finance Inquiries

Ms. Benoit,

In order for the loans to be included on the summary page and in your cash on hand, they must be dated within the dates the report covers. All of the loans on schedule B of LA-92016 were made during the 30-P reporting period. If new loans were made, you will need to amend the 10-P report to include them. Any loans made for the 10-P reporting period must be dated between 9/25/2020 and 10/14/2020. If you need help with this, please do not hesitate to contact Michele Andrieu or myself.

Angela Newsom, Division Director
Campaign Finance & Lobbying
Ethics Administration
P. O. Box 4368
Baton Rouge, LA 70821
225-219-5600
800-842-6630
225-381-7271 (fax)

-----Original Message-----

From: kathy4fcjudge@gmail.com <kathy4fcjudge@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 9:59 PM
To: Angela Newsom (ETHICS) <Angela.Newsom@LA.GOV>
Subject: Amendment to LA 92016: Campaign Finance Inquiries

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Please do not click on links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Campaign Finance Inquiries

I was asked to review this form that I filed, LA 92016, and when I opened the form, I had filed all the correct forms, but for some reason the program did not carry over the loans to the summary page.

I don't know why the program did that and I can't add the amounts from the forms to the summary, they have to come from the forms within the program.

So at this point the only thing I can do is print out the form and file the summary page by hand unless someone can let me know why the numbers wouldn't transmit from the form to the summary.

Any assistance would be much appreciated. Thank You Kathy Benoit



STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE CIVIL SERVICE
LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS
P. O. BOX 4368
BATON ROUGE, LA 70821
(225) 219-5600
FAX: (225) 381-7271
1-800-842-6630
www.ethics.la.gov

January 15, 2021

Ms. Kathy Reznik Benoit
10210 Glen Arbor Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70809-3878

REPORT DUE February 17, 2021

Because your last report for the election held November 3, 2020 shows a "deficit" (i.e. outstanding debts or loans) of \$2,100.00 and a surplus of \$22.83, **you are required** to file a supplemental report of receipts and disbursements **electronically** using L.E.A.D.E. R.S. Supplemental reports are filed annually and must be complete through the preceding December 31st. Supplemental reports are filed until all debts and loans, including the candidate's personal loans, have been reported as paid or forgiven. Once debts, loans, and expenses for an election have been satisfied any remaining funds should be reported as contributions for a future election on a report marked as an "annual" report. Separate reports marked "supplemental" should be filed for each election in which there was a deficit. If you are reporting on more than one election, keep records and reports separate.

Information regarding electronic filing using the Louisiana Ethics Administration Disclosure & Electronic Reporting System (LEADERS) is available on our website at www.ethics.la.gov.

If this is your first time electronically filing, you must submit an Electronic Filing Affidavit and **obtain a password and ID** from this office. Affidavits can be printed from our website and must be received no later than **February 2, 2021**.

Late fees of \$60.00 per day for district office candidates will be assessed for every day supplemental reports are late.

If you have accepted a contribution for a future election, an annual report should be filed in addition to the supplemental report. Annual reports are also due by **February 17, 2021**.

Please contact a member of our Campaign Finance staff at (225) 219-5600 or (800) 842-6630 regarding any questions or necessary corrections.

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STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE CIVIL SERVICE
LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS
P. O. BOX 4368
BATON ROUGE, LA 70821
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www.ethics.la.gov

January 8, 2021

Ms. Kathy Reznik Benoit
10210 Glen Arbor Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70809-3878

Re: 10 days prior to general Campaign Finance Report -- November 3, 2020 election

Dear Ms. Benoit:

The campaign finance report you filed December 30, 2020 as noted above was examined for errors on its face. A complete audit was not conducted and this letter should not be construed as preventing further examination of your report.

The following errors/omissions were noted. Please review your records and amend the report accordingly.

Cover Page: #5 Filed after the election and all loans and debts paid was checked; however, there are still outstanding loans for this election.

If your intent is to close this election, you need to submit an amendment to your report showing a contribution from you on Schedule A-1 in the amount of \$2,118.21 and then repay the \$2,100.00 loan on Schedule B.
(CHECK THE SUMMARY TAB LINE 18 SHOULD BE \$0)

Please call if you have questions or need my assistance with the amendment.

Since your report was filed electronically, you must amend Filing ID **LA-93942** electronically.

Please submit this amendment by **January 22, 2021** to avoid any further action with respect to the inaccuracy(ies). If you need assistance, you may contact me at the above address or via e-mail at michele.andrieu@la.gov.

Sincerely,

Michele Andrieu

Michele Andrieu
Compliance Investigator

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Fax Cover Page



Recipient:

+1 (225) 381-7271
LA Board of Ethics Executive Secretary



Date Sent:

03/17/2021



Number of Pages:

7 (including cover page)



Sender:

Katherine Benoit -



Reply-to Email:

kathyrbenoit@gmail.com



Reply-to Phone:

+1 (225) 335-1031



Reply-to Fax:



Subject:

Request for a waiver of the late Fee Assessment for
November 3, 2020 Election 10-P and 10-G Forms



Message:

I am attaching my request for a waiver of the late fee assessment for the November 3, 2020 Election 10-P Campaign Finance Disclosure Report filed 4 days late and the 10-G Campaign Finance Disclosure Report filed 35 days late for Kathy Reznik Benoit candidate for the November 3, 2020 election



Sent with Mobile Fax



Unknown @Port 9100

03/17/2021 3:21 PM

Start Page

Xerox® VersaLink™ B405DN Multifunction Printer